

HRSA Focuses on Children's Health

In Tennessee's southern Appalachia, the Community Health Outreach Program provides primary health care services for children, adolescents and their families. The program also links patients with mental health services and provides basic prevention programs, including physical exams and mental health screening.

To combat a high infant mortality rate, a few of Boston's neighborhoods are working with the Mother's Mentors Project, which links pregnant and parenting women with women who have had successful pregnancies and parenting experiences. The mentors, who come from the same neighborhood as the participants, provide health education as well as emotional support.

These are two of HRSA's Children's Health Programs, part of the Department of Health and Human Services' investment in the new Children's Health Insurance Program. The DHHS expects to spend as much as \$24 billion on the program over the next five years.

HRSA, which is part of the DHHS, spent nearly \$1.1 billion on Children's Health Programs in 1997; an additional \$1.4 billion is expected to be spent in 1998. These programs are designed to help meet the needs of all children, but particularly those who are underserved and uninsured.

To ensure that the Clinton Administration is meeting its goal of improving the lives of all children, HRSA assesses each potential program against five principles and proceeds with those that measure up. These principles state that health care services must be comprehensive and coordinated, of the highest quality, community-based, culturally competent, and family-centered.

All four of HRSA's bureaus (Health Professions, Primary Health Care, HIV/AIDS, and Maternal and Child Health) are participating in the project by funding programs. Nationwide, these programs provide prenatal care, immunizations and physical exams to more than 21 million women and children.

To find out more, visit HRSA's Focus on Child Health Web site, at <http://www.hrsa.dhhs.gov/childhealth/>. ■

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